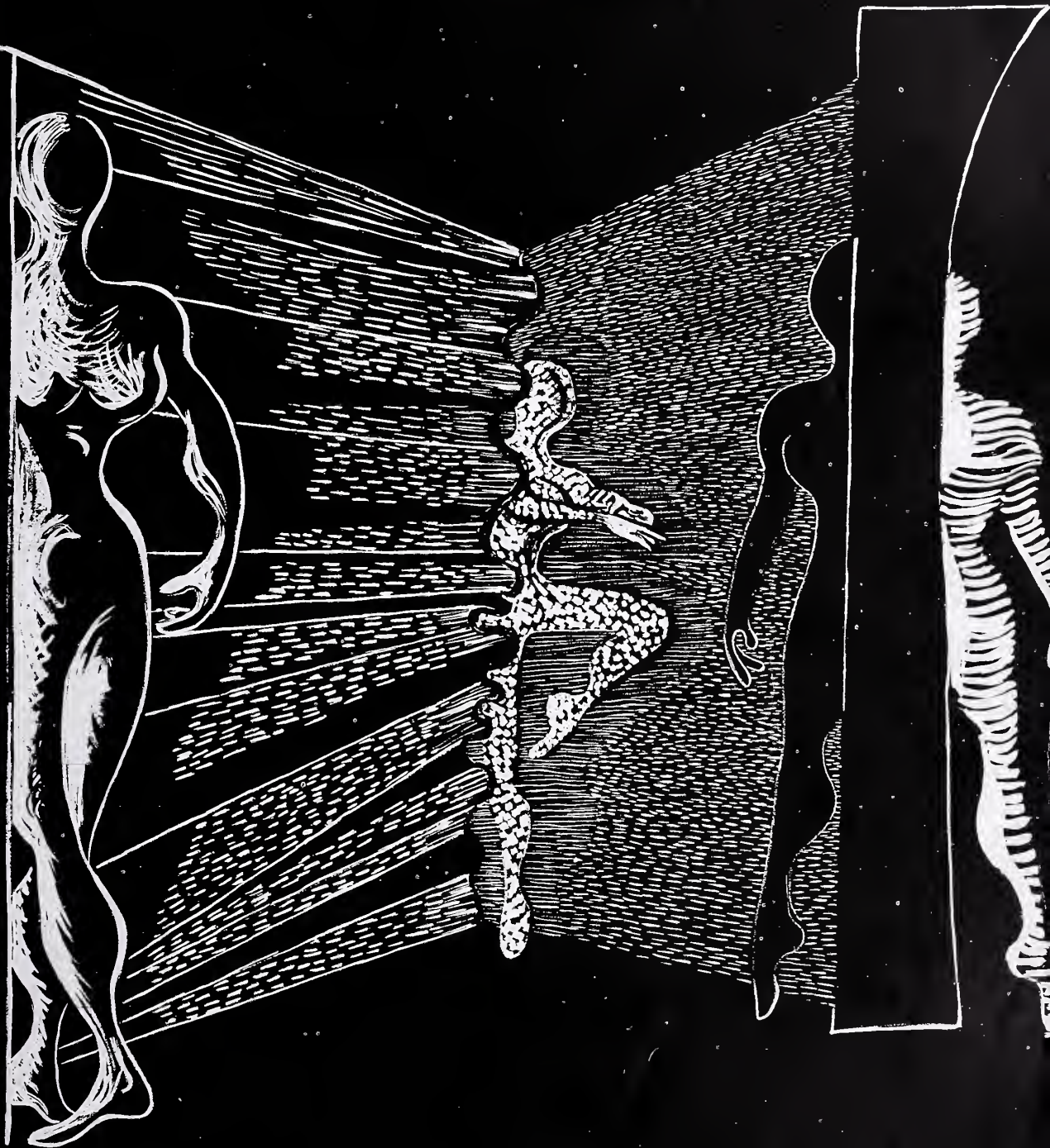


# *Dance Index*



**J. JUNYER**





# *Dance Index*

*Managing Editor*

MARIAN EAMES

*Editors*

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN  
PAUL MAGRIEL

## ON DANCE

Dancing may well have been the earliest manifestation of art. It is easy to imagine art made its debut by using our feet, rather than by means of our voice or our hands. The need to express our state of joy or sorrow through formalized movement is the very essence of dancing as art. As such, the dance grows and develops with our needs. Barring occasional regressions it advances steadily through the perfecting of its laws as well as its freedom.

A notable example of the collaboration of two different arts which proves mutually beneficial is that of ballet and painting. Each has done much for the other. Yet there is need today to bring painting for theatrical dancing to our own times. Scenic art conceived as a background or frame is now in the last phase of a glorious period.

There was a time when romantic dancers, in front of a romantic painting, danced to romantic music for romantic spectators. We find this unity quite rare today. There are cases of antagonism among the three collaborating arts. Sometimes painting disturbs the choreography, while at others it becomes incidental, obscured, or suppressed altogether. Yet a ballet in front of a black curtain with nondescript costumes, is like a ballet without music.

The perfect integration of the three arts, with none playing a subordinate role, enhances the choreography so that the ballet as a whole acquires the force of universality.

Such a harmonious collaboration depends, of course, upon a common unity of purpose of choreographer-composer-painter, each working as such. But unity should not mean excessive calculation, which so rations the sensitivity as to make it impossible for the emotions to function freely.

Dance, like sculpture, should be seen from all sides, not from a single direction as is now the case. It is more natural for an audience to form a ring than a row. But since a round theater for dance is not yet in sight, we must adjust our work to the frontal vision. This is less of a restriction and more of a challenge than is commonly understood, since the "front vision" includes seats on the side aisles, and high in the balconies as well as those in the eighth row center.

The essential visual center of the dance is the axis of motion.

The painter must vitalize, not the frame or the background, not even the visual center of choreographic motion, but must assimilate and organize the essence of each dance. Through the aesthetic environment he creates he must produce in the spectator a feeling of active identification with the dancers.

JOAN JUNYER

*Acknowledgement:* Mr. Junyer wishes to thank Miss Frances Pernas and Dr. George Amberg of the Museum of Modern Art for their help in the selection and arrangement of material in this issue.

Subscription: \$5.00 a year. Single copies 50 cents.

Copyright 1947 by Dance Index-Ballet Caravan Inc., 130 West 56 St., New York 19, N. Y.  
Vol. VI, No. 7. 1947.



## BIOGRAPHY

Joan Junyer was born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1904. He has been a painter since his early youth. In 1922 he moved to Paris where he had his studio until the war. He also traveled through Europe and spent some time in the northern countries. His work has been shown in a number of group exhibitions (Salon des Surindependents, Paris, 1931, 1934; Museum of Copenhagen, 1932; Fleishtein Gallery, Berlin, 1933; Jeu de Paume, Paris, 1936; Leicester Gallery, London, 1939, etc.), and he has had many one man shows (the Percier, Vavin and Druet galleries in Paris, 1930, 1933 and 1935 respectively; Museum of Modern Art, Madrid, 1934, etc.).

In 1929 his work was presented in America for the first time at the Carnegie International, where he was awarded an honorable mention (see painting reproduced below). He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in the United States, mostly through the Rockefeller Institute, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Carnegie International, to which he was invited regularly before his arrival in this country in 1942.



Majorcan Dancers. 1929. Oil on canvas. Collection, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh. Photograph, Serra

## FOLK DANCE IN MAJORCA



by Robert Graves

The island of Majorca where Joan Junyer used to paint during the summers before the Spanish Civil War, is part of Spain, but totally different in atmosphere from the turbulent mainland. The islanders pride themselves on their calm, and are content that little of historical importance has happened to them since Majorca's conquest from the Moors in 1229. The British or French have never occupied their island; apart from a brief rising against tyrannical landlords in 1521 they have had no rebellions; they are free of vendettas and crimes of passion or violence; they consider drunkenness a disgrace.

This conservative spirit has kept alive folk-dances, linked with the main festivals of the agricultural year, which date back beyond the Moorish, Byzantine, Vandal and Roman occupations to the neolithic age. These have their counterparts in British folk dances of the same hoary antiquity, most of which however had died out by the close of the last century. Thus the horned "Cossiers" of Montuiri recall the "Ooser" bull-dancers of Yeovil; the "Caballets" of Pollensa recall the hobby-horsemen of Woodstock. The

British dances were killed by the growth of industrialism, cheap food imports and the chapels. These forces are not in operation in Majorca, whose chief riches are oil, figs, almonds, pork, citrous fruits and cereals, and where the dances are so closely linked with religion that at the village of Alaró, which specializes in capers (no joke intended), the professional dance begins inside the Church.

The dances are performed with the greatest energy but without the mad abandon of the gipsy or Andalusian popular fiestas. In the mountain villages, the background is grey granite houses and olive trees; in the villages of the plain it is sandstone houses, almond groves and palms. They are ritual dances, originally in honor of the Iberian Moon Goddess, patroness of fruit and cereals, who kept her hold on the island until Christian times and whose matriarchal power is still obscurely felt by the villagers. The bull-horns and hobby-horses are relics of the totem-clans which she controlled, and in one of the Valldemosa dances, she is represented by two women who circle around a single male dancer, with their arms curved above their heads in moon fashion. He kneels, swaying spellbound, with a hand stretched in supplication until one or the other raises him up to dance with her. The costumes are traditional, the colors rich but not gaudy. Short waistcoats and baggy breeches for the men; bell-shaped skirt and tightly fitting black bodice for the women with gold buttons at the elbows, and a "volant" or moon-halo of lace around the face. The traditional instruments are the bag-pipes, tabor and flageolet (flaviol).

Junyer's deafness has prevented him from ever hearing them, but like Goya, also deaf and with the same demonic intensity of spirit, he has cultivated a supra-visual sense of the relation of color and movement which fill his paintings with all the noise of the fiesta.





Cossiers (Majorcan dancers). 1929. Oil on mahogany. Collection, T. McGreevy, London. Photograph, Serra

opposite:

top: Cavallets (horsemen). 1935. Oil on canvas. Collection, Robert Graves, London.

Photo: Serra

bottom: Saint John's Dance in Majorca. 1936. Oil on canvas. Collection, T. S. Mathews, New York. Photo: Duchamp





## GREEK CLASSICAL THEATRE

Junyer's first important work for the theatre was done in Barcelona, in the spring of 1936, when he was commissioned to do the staging and costumes for the Greek Classical Theatre. This theatre, an open-air bowl on a slope of the Montjuich Park, was dedicated to the presentation of classical works and dance.

Most productions had no other scenery than a few props in the background, the lighting being used as an all important scenic element. Frequently the first part of a performance was staged to exploit the sunset colors of natural daylight, elaborate artificial lighting being used in the second part for contrast.

Among the works staged were: "The Golden Fleece," the ballets "David" (Gimenez-Debussy) and "The Abduction of the Silo Maidens" (Arensky-Tchaikowsky), and several production of the University Theatre.

Junyer's colors for the costumes were often planned to vary in tone with the change of intensity, type (daylight or artificial) and color of the light, and *to maintain a variable harmony among themselves*. He tried to adapt the use of color to sudden or subtle changes of feeling in the play or dance.



Greek Theatre. 1936. Watercolor. Collection, Dr. J. Borralleres Barcelona.

Photograph, Serra



## PAINTINGS OF CUBAN DANCES

Cuban dances occupied but a brief period in Junyer's production. Most of them he did in *grattage* (drawings produced by scratching through a layer of paint laid on a thick coating of plaster), because of the necessity "to counterbalance, by a sober technique, the exuberant coloring of the subject." He concentrated on achieving a concise, expressive line which he considers of the utmost importance in working with dance themes.

Junyer's sojourn in the tropics was a

period of learning, of revision of his earlier European work, which prepared him for his new activities in America.

The spectacle of popular dancing in Cuba is quite unlike that in Majorca. While in Majorca dances are performed in the brilliant Mediterranean sunlight, they are held through the night in Cuba. A certain asceticism in Majorcan dance movements is absent in the free expression of the Cuban whirl and swing.



Conga. 1941. Grattage. Collection, Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C.

Photograph, Woltz

## BALLET

"La Nuit de la Saint-Jean" was based on a legend of the Pyrenees and the festivities that take place on St. John's night. Junyer's costumes were inspired partly by the popular folklore (the "Giants" and "Midgets"), partly by the romanesque tradition of the region (the "Ghosts of the Forest" and "Eros"). In the local celebrations giants were impersonated by men encased in huge straw bodies, their own feet, tiny in contrast, supporting the towering mass. The midgets achieved their effect by painting faces on large kettles which they pulled down over their heads to cover most of their bodies. In the ballet, the make-up of many characters was treated as an integral part

of the pictorial scene, and a necessary adjunct to the unity of the costumes. Later, in "The Minotaur," Junyer developed this idea further.

In 1943 Junyer designed the sets for two ballets by Argentinita: "El Cafe de Chinitas" (Argentinita-Pittaluga), presented at The Museum of Modern Art, and "Old Madrid," (Argentinita-Chueca Breton), presented at the Metropolitan Opera.

Junyer's original scheme for "The Cuckold's Fair" (Garcia Lorca-Lopez-Pittaluga) was to set off the vari-colored costumes against a black and white curtain.



First drawing for a projected ballet for the Catalanian Government. 1936. Pen and ink. Collection, Museum of Barcelona. Photograph, Duchamp





Costumes for the ballet "La Nuit de la Saint-Jean," Col. de Basil's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, London, 1939. Above: Ghosts in the Forest (Act II)



Three Devils. "La Nuit de la Saint-Jean"



Eros. "La Nuit de la Saint-Jean"









Costumes for "The Cuckold's Fair," Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, New York, 1944.  
Collection, Lt. R. Girardon, Washington. Photograph, Woltz

Setting for "The Cuckold's Fair."

Photograph, Sunami



opposite: Costumes for "La Nuit de la Saint-Jean." Giants and Midgets.

Photograph, Sunami

## ON PAINTING

Art anticipates the realities that are discovered later.

Many functions in life have limits, but art is limitless. It has a great power of research and renewal, an infinity of expression in its means, and a vast external influence. But this influence has too often been unconscious and irresponsible. Instead of anticipating the times and the realities, both abstract and concrete, some painters have run circles within themselves. They have thus passed into a secondary intellectual and social position, because, although the expression of one's intimate self is necessary, it is not so as an exclusive finality. When an artist's ultimate interest is systematically himself, it is easy for him to be lost in arbitrary divagation, to lose his intention, and to avoid consciousness and responsibility.

Today, painting is expanding and the painter must emerge from his frame.

I believe that the easel-picture is the dynamic center, the basic cell, the point of departure of painting. As such, it is limited in itself but infinite in realizations. You cannot, for example, bring a painting directly from the easel to the theater of today without detriment to the theatrical action. Nor can you make it into a mural by enlarging it and imposing it onto contemporary architecture without detriment to the visual integration of the entire construction. In other words, merely transplanting a picture does not give it a pertinent place in the overall constructional unity.

The organization of life today brings new needs and obligations.

As a building emerges from the blueprint, so the inner reality of the pictorial

image must assume its own proper body, its own personal physical presence. Then the independance and utility of painting are extended to a concrete realization beyond the easel-painting.

A static, fixed picture is not quite the appropriate equivalent of our times.

I try to do paintings that have, not a single aspect but many: not one vision, that may be turned into a rigid, mechanical habit of being seen, but diverse visions that stimulate by means of many paths, that sense of receptivity and the searching curiosity that is inside of all of us.

A painting that makes use of accidents and incidents such as shifting lights (both sun and artificial), plastic form, changing positions of the spectator's eyes, may incite a process of constant adaptation and transformation which is the essence of life. Thus the painting can be assimilated freely, instead of forcing itself upon the spectator by frontal pressure.

I am driving towards a constructive place for painting, in association or rather as integrated with the other arts, by modern science and technique.

The direct intervention of the painter at the same level as the other collaborators, would mean a conscious and responsible cooperation. It should not be misinterpreted as a "return to the Renaissance" (since a painter today has so much to do just painting) nor to collectivism (such as the attempts of a team of artists to paint a common mural). Neither of these solutions seems suitable to the times. I believe they would be as harmful as isolating the artist, either at the center of the world, or outside of it.

J.J.

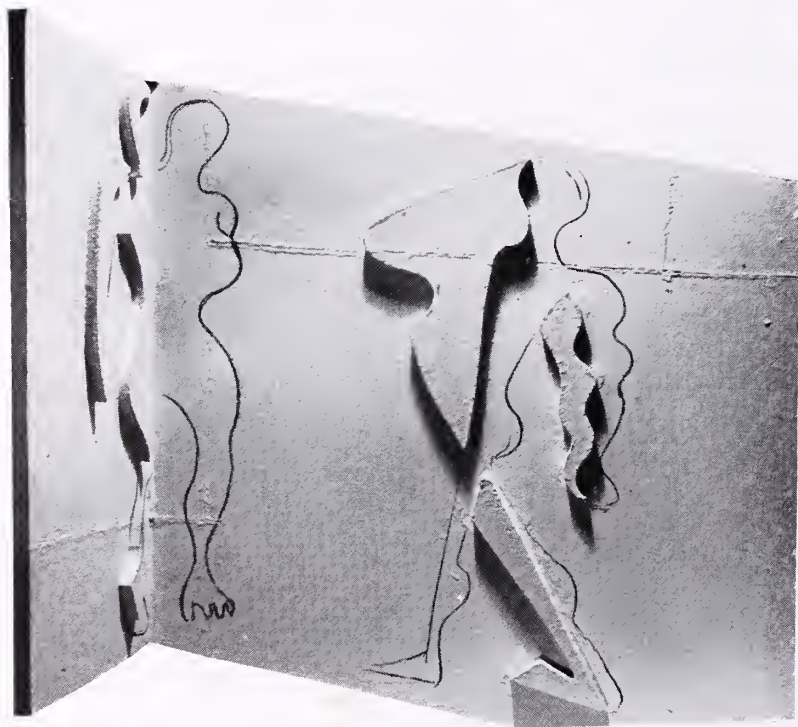
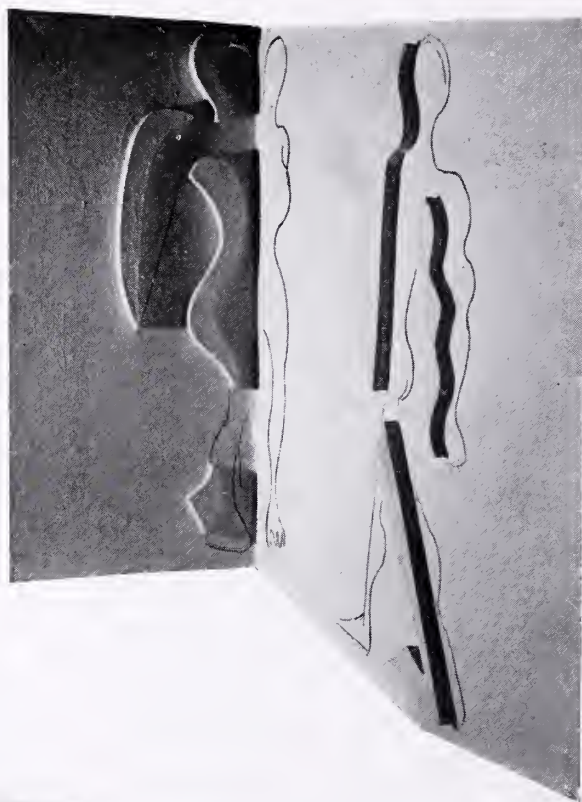




Spheric painting. Oil on plaster. 1945.

Photograph, Leo Bukzin

TWO VIEWS OF CORNER PAINT-  
ING FOR STAIRCASE (in course of  
execution). Photographs, Leo Bukzin





## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART EXHIBITION 1945

Junyer's ideas on the function of painting in relation to the theater brought about an exciting exhibition, arranged by Dr. George Amberg, Curator of the Department of Theater Arts, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. It has since been exhibited in Havana, (Lyceum Club) and Mexico (Palacio de Bellas Artes). The following are excerpts from the Museum's announcement of the exhibition:

This is the first public presentation of Junyer's most recent stage projects. . . . Space and movement, color, light and structure are the elements with which he works . . . emphasizing the relation between performer and scenic environment. . . . These projects are the application to the stage of

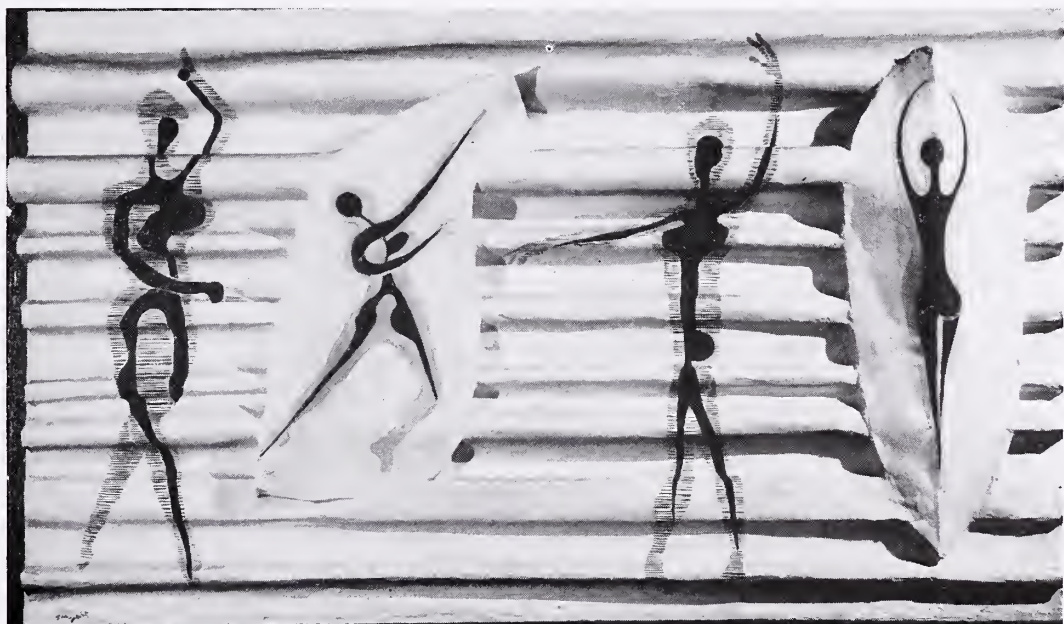
Junyer's principle in painting. . . .

The plaster models illustrate the integration of all scenic elements into one function.

The utilization of the back-drop, the interrelation of decor and costume, the incorporation of sculptured forms with the dance movements, are materialized in the different projects.

The last three figures explain the integration of costume and movement.

The high sensitivity of modern dancers to spatial tensions and relationships has called forth the collaboration of modern painters and sculptors. There is every reason to hope and expect that the stage of contemporary dance will further serve as a proving ground for experiments of weight and value such as the projects by Junyer.

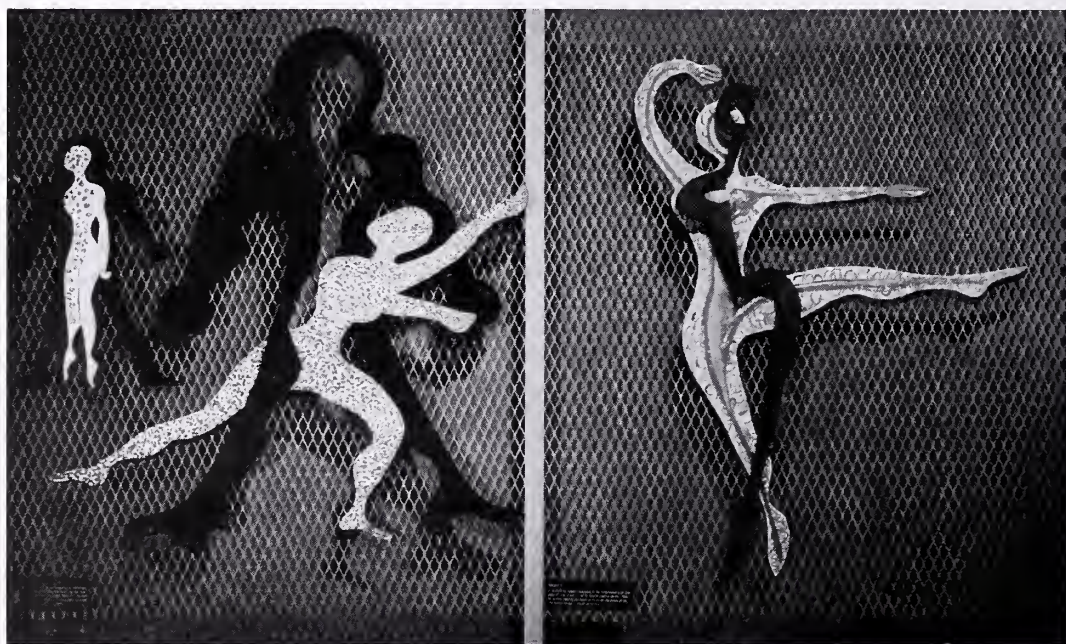


**Four Ballerinas.** Oil on plaster. Exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art, 1945.

Photograph, Sunami



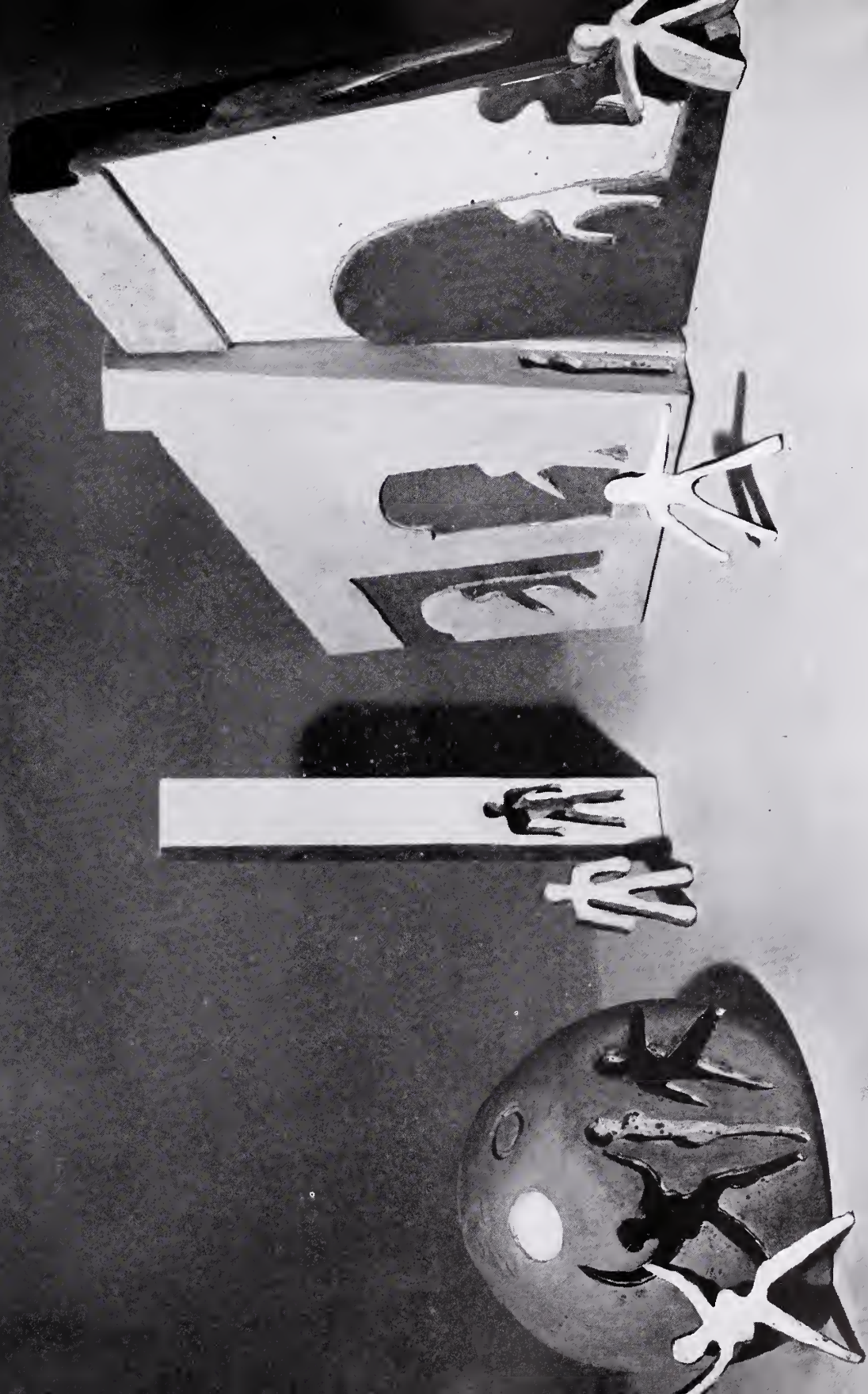
Examples from exhibition of Junyer's work at the Museum of Modern Art, 1945



opposite: Project for scenery from the same exhibition.

Photographs, Sunami





## THE MINOTAUR



"The Minotaur," a dramatic ballet in two parts, with music by Elliot Carter and choreography by John Taras, was presented in New York by Ballet Society in the spring of 1947.

The interpretation of the Minotaur story in this ballet first centered around the figure of the man-bull as the bodily representation of the antagonism between Crete and Greece. After some revisions, the labyrinth finally became the central element, a bull's eye view of it immediately focussing the attention in Junyer's fore-curtain. This curtain was conceived in such a way as to permit transformation into two aspects of the same theme, to create the feeling of mystery contained in the legend, and to center all eyes on the concentric labyrinth, thus preparing for the entrance of Pasiphae and the Bull, when the side curtains recede and the narrow central curtain gives new depth to the stage.

The scenery was all white in order to project the dancing with a maximum of clarity and allow the direct play of light.

The tri-dimensional labyrinth, affording many entrances and exits, was architecturally designed to be used in the choreography, permitting partial views of the dancers, so that they could appear and disappear in various degrees.

For the Bull, Junyer transformed the arms of the dancer into horns, which thus became choreographically useful. The intention was to aid the dancer in acquiring full mastery of his role, the arm-horns, by themselves, able to express the tender or angered feelings of the Bull. Junyer gave a subdued effect to the rest of the costume (in dark blue-gray) while the horns stand out in clear yellow.

The color and design of the other costumes, except for Ariadne, who wears some intermediate colors as a link between the two groups, were planned to emphasize the difference in the cultures of Crete and Greece. For the Cretans: terra-cotta, red, tan and white in simple color areas to outline their clean-cut movements; for the Greeks, light yellow and gray, as though the figures stood half in pale sunlight, half in shadow, the two profiled color halves of their costumes contributing to the rhythm and drama of their fluid movements.

Junyer's designs encourage the direct interaction of choreography and costume; they are created as an integral part of the dancers' movements. His concern with make-up as an important pictorial element enhances the unity of his production as a whole. The make-up of the Greeks was yellow and gray, following up in face and head the two color areas of their costumes. As with the Cretan slaves, their features were effaced. This made the principal characters, Theseus and Ariadne, stand out more forcefully. Their costumes had more detail, the make-up emphasized their eyes and facial expression. Thus, by means of design and color in costume and make-up, the important figures become individualized, in contrast to the anonymity of the group.











Costumes for "The Minotaur." Ariadne, Cretan men, Greek girls, Theseus. Temperas

opposite: The Bull

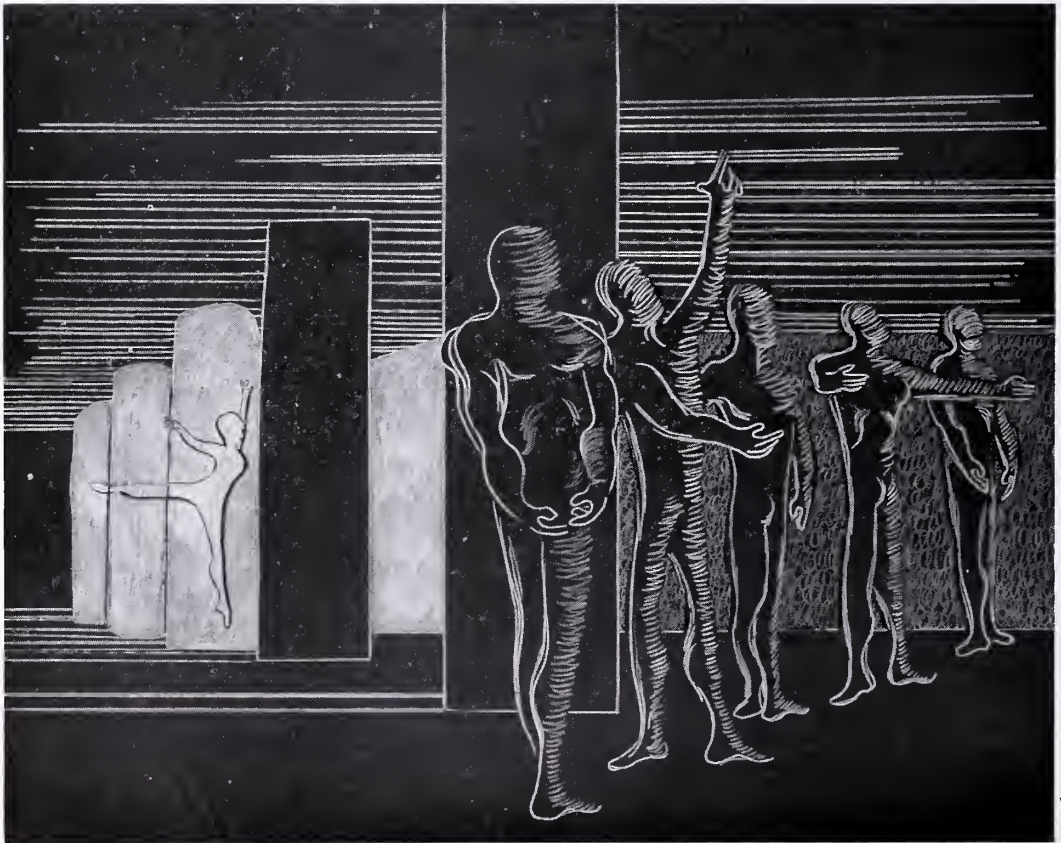
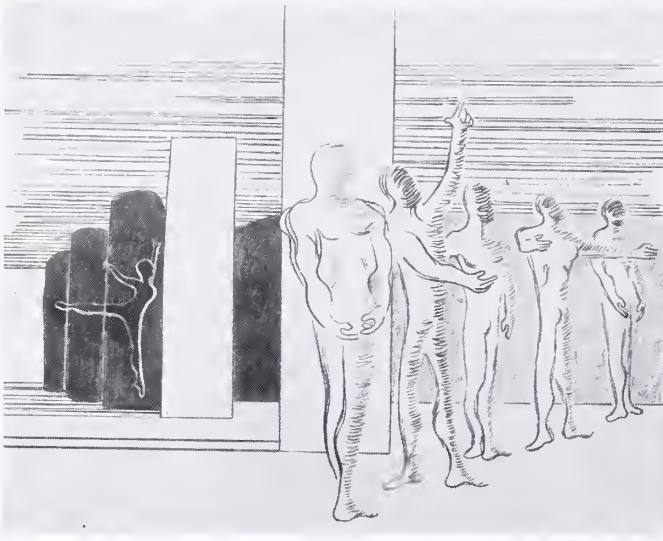






## RECENT PROJECTS

BALLET ON THE  
FIVE POSITIONS,  
IN POSITIVE  
AND NEGATIVE





INTEGRATION OF SCENERY  
AND DANCERS.  
ABSTRACT AND REAL  
FORM.



## INTEGRATION OF COSTUME AND MOVEMENT

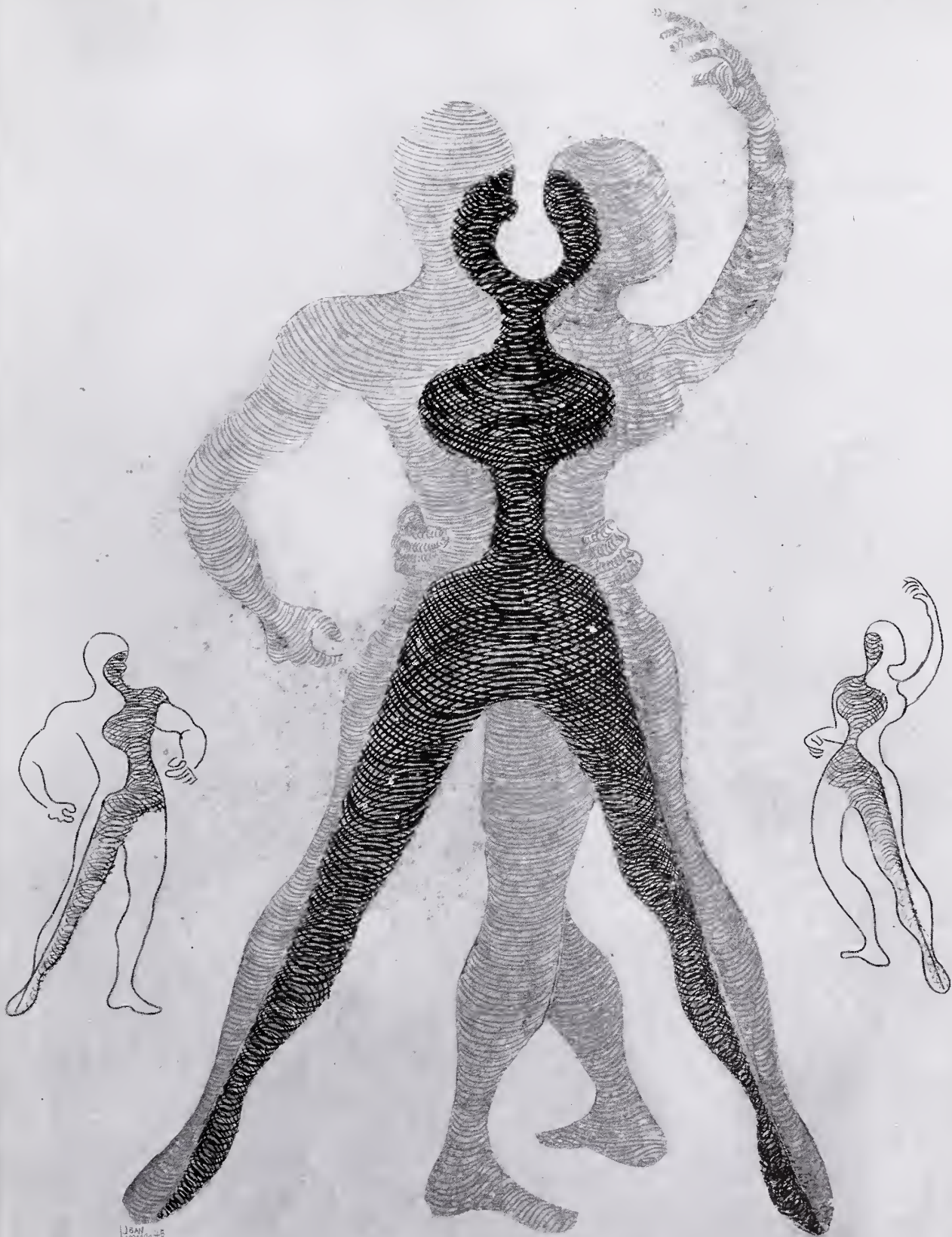
below: **Two Men.** 1947

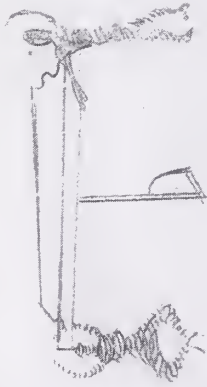
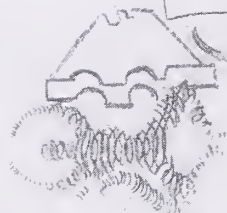
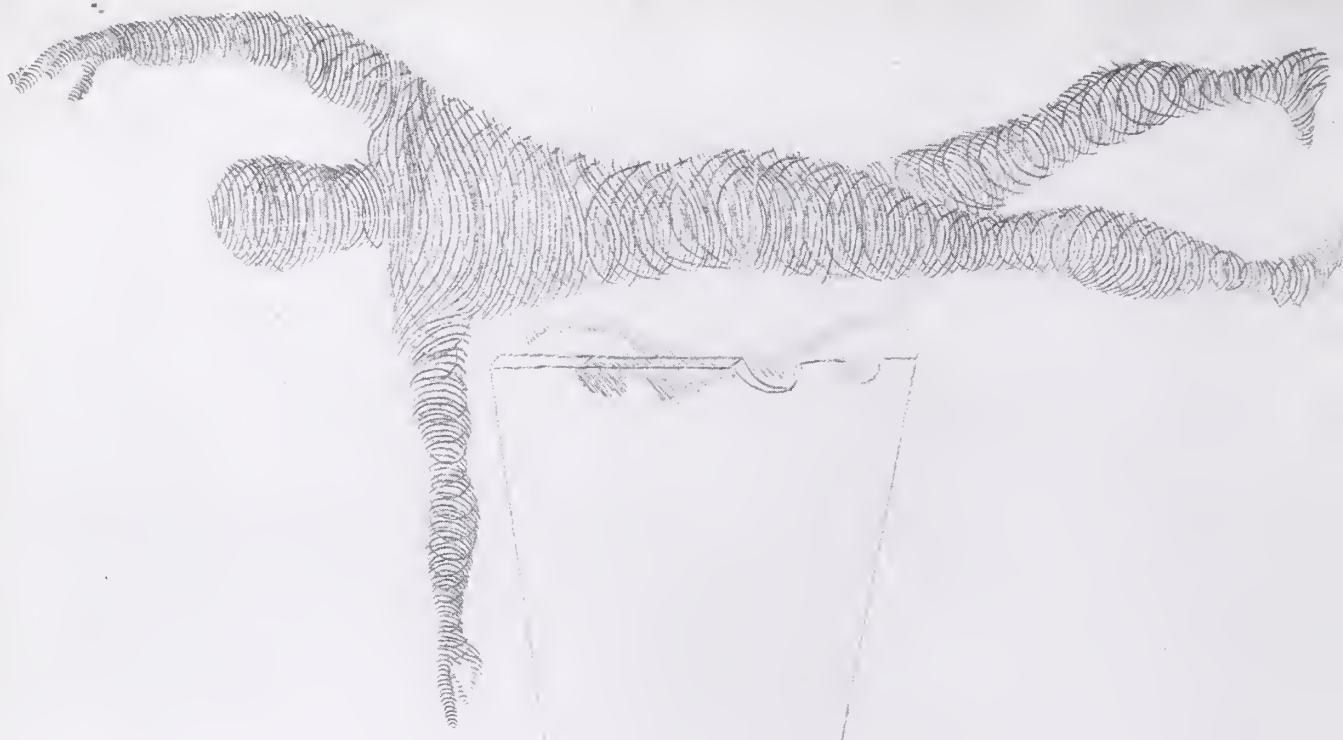
opposite: **Man and Woman.** Tempera. Collection, Dr. W. O'D. Pierce, New York.

Photograph, Woltz











## EXCERPTS FROM CRITIQUES OF JUNYER'S DANCE WORK

JEAN CASSOU. *Introduction to the catalogue of Junyer's exhibition in Lille, 1934.*

Here is a different Spain. Junyer's Spain is quiet, clear, luminous; he produces a joyful and serene impression with his popular fiestas, his Majorcan devil-dancers. . . . A grave and tender feeling is expressed in the freedom and sagacity of his drawing. . . . Junyer, who sings with such simplicity the sober and melodious joy of life, must be considered among the best representatives of humanism.

PIERRE MORNAND. *Le Bibliophile, 1931, and L'Européen, 1935, Paris.*

Junyer is a magician in the use of white; he plays it as an organ. . . . Not only his work, but the very character of his highly personal talent has a luminous quality. . . . He combines the most precise drawing with a haunting poetry of color.

Some of his Majorcan dancers, grouping and dispersing in a golden, sun-lit atmosphere, recall the sumptuous creations of Diaghilev, though it is a different type of enchantment.

I think his art is always careful to express a definite intention . . . and is assembled with the intuitive discernment of the artist who knows how to choose the essential, and the essential characteristic.

EMILY GENAUER. *New York World Telegram, September 8, 1945.*

The Museum of Modern Art has on display . . . a show of ballet designs by Joan Junyer. The show consists of four plaster models for settings, one dance composition in high relief and seven costume designs in a new relief technique. . . .

Junyer rejects the backdrop painted on flats, drops and wings with traditional picture perspective. The dancers instead of making their entrances and exits from the wings, appear and vanish into the depths of various sculptural shapes and panels projecting into the stage. . . .

The dancers themselves, instead of wearing costumes that, however imaginative per se, are still essentially conventional, wear tights that are broken into various color areas and patterns so conceived that the actual volume of the body appears to change as the dancers move about in different positions. For instance, two dancers in one of his sketches create the effect of a complete fusion, the interlaced bodies melting into one illusory whole. When they separate, each costume is dramatic in its own right.

It's a most difficult thing to explain, but as

suggested in Junyer's designs at the Museum, it is an approach with infinite possibilities. It is so vital an original as to make most present day ballet decor and costume design seem as old hat in comparison with these new things as realistic illustrations are when compared with abstract art.

JANE WATSON CRANE. *The Washington Post, October 13, 1946.*

This quiet, modest, sincere and indefatigable worker has made great strides since he came to the United States five years ago. He already has contributed some original and progressive ideas to ballet design and his experiments are just beginning. Junyer's costume designs are conceived in relation to the human figure and dance movements. In his newer work the conventional idea of (the painter's) scenery is eliminated altogether. The first real test of Junyer's innovations will come this spring in New York when the Ballet Society will present *Minotaur*, his new ballet.

EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL. *The New York Times, March 30, 1947.*

Of the three new ballet sets I thought that by Joan Junyer the most interesting. This Spanish painter, whose work used to be included in the Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, and who designed the decor for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's "Cuckold's Fair," has worked out for "Minotaur" a fascinating labyrinth: a complex arrangement of scroll-like white constructions, against and within which the dancers move. Junyer's key colors for the costumers are red and pale yellow.

REED SEVERIN. *Dance Magazine, May, 1947.*

I don't believe it's going too far to say that art (painting) has played almost as great a role in modern ballet as choreography itself. . . . Junyer has broken radically with traditional picture perspective painted on drops. He has conceived a tri-dimensional design representing the labyrinth and other decor by various white sculptural shapes through which the dancers make their entrances and exits. . . . (His) Costumes have always been considered an integral part of the setting and their design has attempted partially to project and extend the dance movement beyond the body's anatomical limitations. . . . Colors, costumes and settings have all been neatly and dramatically tied together in the foreground, which focuses the attention on a bull's eye view of the labyrinth.

